

WEEKLY UPDATE – JUNE 4 – JUNE 11, 2016

“Tell you what I like the best –
‘Long about knee-deep in June
‘Bout the time strawberries melts
On the vine...”

James Whitcomb Riley (1849-1916), “Knee-Deep in June”

Last Saturday’s heavy rain hammered the more delicate petals off the trees, shrubs and flowering plants. But it feels a little more summery now and we have beautiful roses to enjoy. A few items to report.

1. In response to a query from English visitors about information regarding the history of the garden, Susan M. suggested Betty Stubbs’ *From Golf Course to Garden* which is available in the Gift Shop.
2. Marilyn G. forwarded a website, www.madamefromage.com that comments on the use of birch or spruce “belts” for wrapping fall, seasonal cheeses such as Vacherin Mont d’Or and Epoisses.
3. The Tuesday guides found the key to the radio cabinet in the cutlery drawer in the Volunteer Lounge. **Please return it to the lockable Guide Drawer at the Information Desk.** If you are guiding after hours, you can still return it to its proper place. **Ask your captain about the hiding place for the alternate key.** A photo showing the location is at the front of the Driving Guides’ Binder. If there is someone at the Admissions Desk he/she should know where it is located.
4. The masking tape on the signboard is illegible and needs to be replaced.
5. Seen in the garden – two Thursday visitors noted red-eared slider turtles in nesting mode, one way up by the tree peonies in the Sino-Himalayan Garden and one closer to Livingstone Lake near the Glasshouse. The former is going to need some help getting her offspring safely to water so the visitor who spotted it in mid-May plans to return at hatching time to offer assistance. The gardeners have been alerted to the nests’ presence.

Guide Goings On

1. Thursday, June 9 – Guide Education – Rosemary P., Friday guide, will speak on “Learning from Stories: Plant Stories to Guide Your Guiding”. A tea for retired guides will take place afterward.

There will be no Guide Education/Business meetings during July and August.

Garden Goings On

1. Desert Plant Society Show and Sale
Saturday, June 11 – 10:00am-7:00pm
Sunday, June 12 – 10:00am-3:30pm
Floral Hall
Admission by Donation
2. Medicine Wheel Ceremony
Sunday, June 19, 12:00pm-3:00pm
A Celebration of the Summer Solstice
3. Strength and Fragility Exhibition
June 8 – July 4
Discovery Room

The White Garden

“I am trying to make a grey, green and white garden... I hope you will survey a low sea of grey-green clumps of foliage, pierced here and there with tall white flowers. I visualize the white trumpets of dozens of Regale lilies...coming up through the grey of southernwood and artimisia and cotton-lavender with grey and white edging plants...There will be white pansies and white peonies and white irises...”

Vita Sackville-West, “In Your Garden, *The Observer*, January 22, 1950

Tucked away between the Fragrance Garden and the west end of Shaughnessy Restaurant sits the secluded White Garden. Enclosed by a clipped yew hedge on three sides and shielded on the north side by a weeping Atlas blue cedar (*Cedrus libani* ssp.*atlantica* ‘Glauca pendula’), it is a mini version of Vita Sackville-West’s famous White Garden at Sissinghurst and a fine example of the ‘hortus conclusus’.

Sackville-West’s gardening was governed by three principles. Ruthlessness demanded the removal of anything that was not pleasing or didn’t grow. Too much tidiness was also disdained, but an architectural plan, a seasonal plan and a colour plan were all necessary. The one colour garden plan grew out of these principles.

At the entrance to our garden’s tiny White Garden, a showy *Deutzia x magnifica* hangs over the stone wall and provides an invitation into the brick courtyard and the welcoming teak benches. This garden does not have a massive rambler like *Rosa mulliganii* draped over almond trees at its center but it does have a beautiful Alba rose, *Rosa* ‘Mme Legras de St. Germain’ which, unfortunately, took quite a beating in last Saturday’s heavy rain. In the southeast corner, the gorgeous scent-laden hybrid mock orange, *Philadelphus x purpureomaculatus* ‘Belle Etoile’, pulls visitors towards its heavy blossoms which look very similar to those of Rose of Sharon.

The tall bearded *Iris* 'Immortality' and the majestic ornamental onion *Allium* 'Mount Everest' are finished as are the bleeding heart *Dicentra eximia* 'Alba', the white camassia and the white tulips, but the calla lilies are in bloom. Both the white garden phlox and the lovely *Hydrangea aborescens* 'Annabelle' are about to flower. Also known as Snowball or hills-of-snow, this hydrangea has very large blooms which open green, turn white for two or three weeks and then turn green again, making them very popular for dried flower arrangements.

Later blooming plants include *Fatsia japonica* 'Spider's Web' with heavy white speckling on its palmate leaves. *Actaea simplex* 'White Pearl' is a Kamchatka bugbane with green foliage and fragrant pure white bottle brush-like spikes.

Ground plants worth noting include oat grasses, both bulbous and variegated bulbous, and *Hosta undulata* var. *univittata* 'Suji-Giboshi'. And although it is called ground clematis and mingles nicely with shrubs, *Clematis recta* 'Purpurea' can be encouraged to climb. The smoky purple shade of the foliage fades to green by midsummer and the fragrant star-shaped flowers attract bees.

If you haven't visited the White Garden recently, now would be a good time to become reacquainted with its many additional plant treasures and serene delights, especially now as it sits quietly under the pale pink flowers of the *Cornus kousa* 'Satomi' dogwoods.

The 8th of June

"If on the eighth of June it rain
That foretells a wet harvest, men sayen."

The forecast is very promising for no rain but Vancouver is so unpredictable.

Please send your comments, suggestions, questions etc. to pkbuchanan@shaw.ca and look for archived Tree of the Month, Gardener's Walks, Self-Guided Tours and "Weekly Updates" at www.ericanotebook.com.

"Mine is the month of roses..."
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), "The Month of June"

Another heat wave this weekend so remember your sunscreen, water and a hat!

HAVE A WONDERFUL WEEK OF GUIDING!